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FRESH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CURRENT LIFE.

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THE GREATEST CROWN. 1

The tragical death of King Humbert and the ceremonies connected with his funeral brought to public notice again the old iron Crown of Lombardy. This relic is held in great veneration. It consists of a circlet of iron covered with gold leaves and jewels. It is believed that the iron belonged to one of the nails used in the crucifixion, found by St. Helena and converted by the Emperor Constantine into a Crown around his helmet. St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, mentioned it in the year 395. It was worn by Charlemagne at his coronation in 744, and after him by various kings. Napoleon the Great, placed it on his own head at Milan in 1805. It is now the property of the King of Italy. There is another Crown which is within the reach of the humblest man or woman in the world, which it is a far greater honor to wear than the iron Crown of Lombardy. It is the crown that Paul speaks about, and which he calls "The Crown of Righteousness." Even the iron crown of Lombardy shall fall to dust after awhile, but the crown of a righteous character will abide forever.

THE JOY OF COMING HOME. (2)

We sometimes go away on our vacation with rapturous delight feeling that there is nothing so good as to be away from work and home, but when the rest time is over, there is a pathos and a tenderness about coming home which far exceeds all the joy of going away. Mrs. Sangster has a little song about it which emphasises our thoughts with real poetic insight:

There's joy in sailing outward,
Though we leave upon the pier,
With faces grieved and wistful,
Our very dearest dear;
And the sea shall roll between us
For perhaps a whole round year.

There's a joy in climbing mountains,
In fording rushing brooks,
In poking into places
We've read about in books,
In meeting stranger people
With unfamiliar looks.

But the joy of joys is ours
Untouched by any pain,
When we take the home-bound steamer
And catch the home-bound train;
There's nothing half so pleasant
As coming home again.

REPRESENTING THE PRINCE. (3)

One of the newspaper men in Pekin recently told the world that the Emperors of China are relieved of some of their burden of representation by doubles trained to perform the part. Servants of the palace, carefully picked, are told what to do, and on ceremonial occasions represent the Emperor. It has often been rumored that a device of the same kind is used to protect the Sultan, and a tale of a similar sort is going the rounds of the Press about the German Emperor. The men who are selected for this dangerous position regard it as a high honor to thus stand in the place of the Prince. Every Christian is called upon to occupy that relation to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to share his fate among men. It is our privilege to so live that those who know us shall see Him in us. How careful we ought to live that in our personation of Him before the world we shall not bring the name of our Prince into disrepute.

OPPORTUNITIES. (4)

To do our best in life, it is important that we should seize every opportunity for labor, or service, for personal enjoyment, or for bestowing sympathy day by day as it comes to us. These opportunities will not last and will be lost to us for ever unless used at the proper moment. Richard Watson Gilder puts our thought very beautifully in a little poem entitled "On the Wild Rose-tree:"

On the wild rose-tree
Many buds there be,
Yet each sunny hour
Hath but one perfect flower.

Thou who wouldst be wise,
Open wide thine eyes;
In each sunny hour
Pluck the one perfect flower!

THE GRACE OF RECEIVING. (5)

A fox hound, as every sportsman knows, if caught in a trap, or suffering pain from an injury, is most dangerous to approach; even if you assist him out of danger, say, from a pit or hole where, but for you, he would probably be drowned—he will show his gratitude by biting you. There are several kinds of dogs who under similar circumstances will bite not only strangers but their own masters. These ungrateful dogs have not, however, a more ugly way of receiving help than many people. It is not uncommon for men or women who are helped out of a mortifying position by some kind hearted neighbor, or sympathizing friend, to receive the help in such an ugly way that the one who bestowed it can never think about the occasion with pleasure. It is a gracious art to learn how to receive the aid of our fellows beautifully. Simple gratitude and thanksgiving for a kindness received is like sunshine, it floods the whole transaction with light and grace, and both the one who received the help, and the one who gave it, recall the occasion forever afterwards with joy.

THE THINGS THAT LAST. (6)

Wisdom in regard to the conduct of our lives consists largely in having a proper estimate of the relative importance of things. The folly of some people comes mostly in their treating little matters as if they were very important, and treating great concerns with indifference. We would often save ourselves much sorrow by keeping in mind the truth that the little wounds and hurts of daily life are of small account compared with the deep under-current of faith and character. Dinah Mulock Craik brings it out very clear in a little poem:

The little griefs, the petty wounds,
The stabs of daily care—
"Crackling of thorns beneath the pot,"—
As life's fire burns—now cold, now hot—
How hard they are to bear!

But on the fire burns, clear and still;
The cankering sorrow dies:
The small wounds heal; the clouds are rent,
And through this shattered mortal tent
Shine down the eternal skies.

A HELP OR AN INCUMBRANCE. (7)

The census has been contributing to the gaiety of Nations. This story is one of the most suggestive that has come to my notice. The intelligent census taker asked of a live western woman: "Do you own your home?" This was answered in the affirmative, and then came the question: "Is there any incumbrance on it?" Without a moment's hesitation the woman replied: "None—excepting my husband." It is a very pertinent question to put to ourselves, whether we are so living that the people who have most to do with us, regard us as a blessing or an incumbrance.

OUR PLACE. (8)

Isabel Darling brings out very clearly in a poem entitled, "Just Where Thou Art," the very important truth that it is not the part of wisdom for us to wait until some great opportunity for service comes to us, but rather to use the lever at our hand, to do the best we can where we are. There where God has placed us He will find how to make us of service if we will but do our best.

Just where thou art lift up thy voice,
And sing the song that stirs thy heart;
Reach forth thy strong and eager hand
To lift, to save, just where thou art.
Just where thou standest light thy lamp,
'Tis dark to others as to thee;
Their ways are hedged by unseen thorns,
Their burdens fret as thine fret thee.

Out yonder, in the broad, full glare
Of many lamps thine own might pale;
And thy sweet song amid the roar
Of many voices slowly fail;
While these thy kindred wandered on
Uncheered, unlighted, to the end.
Near to thy hand thy mission lies,
Wherever sad hearts need a friend.

GENUINE PRAYER. (9)

One of the great secrets of effective prayer is that the attitude of the Heart shall be right toward God. The heart that recognizes the divine wisdom and love, and trusts to it, will pray as simply as a child asking help from its mother. One of the most beautiful pray ers I have ever read is that of Fenelon:

"O Lord! I know not what I should ask of Thee. Thou only knowest what I want; and Thou lovest me, if I am thy friend, better than I can love myself. O Lord! give to me, Thy child, what is proper, whatsoever it may be. I dare not ask either crosses or comforts. I only present myself before Thee. I open my heart to Thee. Behold my wants, which I myself am ignorant of; but do Thou behold, and do, according to thy mercy, smite or heal, depress me or raise me up. I adore all thy purposes without knowing them. I am silent; I offer myself in sacrifice. I abandon myself to Thee. I have no more desire but to accomplish Thy will. Lord, teach me how to pray. Dwell Thou Thyself in me by Thy Holy Spirit. Amen."

THE SAVING INFLUENCE OF CHILDHOOD. (10)

He must have lived very unobserving indeed, who has not noticed the mellowing and deepening of character that has come to more than one father and mother under the influence of their own children upon them. To many a soul fatherhood or motherhood has been the very call of heaven. It has given them the vision of a grander and better life than they have ever known. Swinburne has recently published a little poem in which he calls childhood "The Salt of the Earth."

If childhood were not in the world,
But only men and women grown;
No baby-locks in tendrils curled,
No baby-blossoms blown;

Though men were stronger, women fairer,
And nearer all delights in reach,
And verse and music uttered rarer
Tones of more god-like speech;

Though the utmost life of life's best hours
Found, as it cannot now find, words;
Though desert sands were sweet as flowers,
And flowers could sing like birds;

But children never heard them, never,
They felt a child's foot leap and run—
This were a drearier star than ever
Yet looked upon the sun.

LOYALTY TO CHRIST. (11)

After Mr. Gladstone had been married fifty years, he said one day to a friend, "My wife has known every political secret I have ever had and has never betrayed my confidence." On one occasion in Mr. Gladstone's early days of Cabinet office his young wife dropped a word in the presence of some of his colleagues, which implied that she knew some matter of confidential importance. Immediately realizing that she had made a slip, she left the room and wrote a penitential note, which she sent in by a servant. Instantaneously came back the reply: "Dearest C—. Don't blame yourself. I don't blame you. It is the only little mistake you ever made. Your affectionate W. E. G." Paul uses the ideal relation between husband and wife as an illustration of the relation that should exist between the christian and Christ. Every one of us should be as loyal to Jesus as Mrs. Gladstone was to her husband, and we may be sure that if we are, he will be still more gentle with us than the Great Prime Minister was to the wife to whom he was so devoted.

THE FIDELITY OF NATURE. (12)

Amid the worries and trials that come to us in our human lives it is a beautiful thing, and one full of infinite comfort to us that we can always trust to the reliability of nature. Men may be kind or hard, the years may have brought sorrow or joy, but however the world may have tricked or cheated us, we know that the spring flowers and the summer trees and the sunset and the sunrise will not fail us. Margaret Sangster puts it very sweetly in her little song, "In the Lane."

A tangle of vines and a waft of sweetness,
And a cup that brims with honey dew,
For here in its wonder of rare completeness
Is the very same wild rose I knew
Years ago, when my hair was golden—
Years ago, when my step was light;
The rose, with its petals of silk unfolden
And kissed into bloom by a star last night.

CLINGING TO THE PRISON. (13)

There is a man in the Ohio State Penitentiary at Columbus who has been there over thirty years. The crime for which he was imprisoned was committed when he was but a young man, only 22 years of age. He is now past middle life and looks like an old man. Nearly 25,000 prisoners have come and gone since he first went to his cell. For a long time he longed for freedom, and dreamed of pardon, but the other day when he was offered a release on parole he declined it, and said he preferred to end his days in the penitentiary. There are many men like that in regard to their sins. They have carried their chains so long that they cease to rebel against them, and give themselves over to be "Led captive by the devil at his will." It is a terrible thing to surrender one's self to the prison house of sin and thus run the risk of seeing the day when the freedom of a noble life will seem to be a thing to be shunned.

FAITH IN GOD. (14)

The great anchor of the soul must always be in our faith in the presence of the living God in the world, and the hope of His personal care of us Ella Wheeler Willcox brings out very strongly the supreme comfort of this faith to the soul.

Though time may dig the grave of creeds,
And dogmas wither in the sod,
My soul will keep the thought it needs—
Its swerveless faith in God.

No matter how the world began,
Nor where the march of science goes,
My trust in something more than man
Shall help me bear life's woes.

Let Progress take the props away,
And moldering superstitions fall;
Still God retains his regal sway—
The Maker of the All.

Why cavil over that or this?
One thought is vast enough for me—
The great Creator was and is,
And evermore will be.

THE WORLD'S GREAT NEED. (15)

Dr. Geo. H. Hepworth, commenting on the words of Paul, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," says that as you can boil a large quantity of maple sap and change it into a small lump of maple sugar, so you can condense all that Christ and the Apostles said and wrote into the one sentence, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." And as from the single bone of a prehistoric animal found in the clay banks of Siberia it is possible for science to reconstruct that animal and even to define its habits, so from the single word "Love" a government can be constructed which would bring about the millennium on earth. When Love is projected into the body politic, it is like leaven in dough, it changes every ingredient in the whole substance.

THE RICHES OF CHILDHOOD. (16)

James Whitcomb Riley, with real poetic genius, sums up in a little song in his latest volume of Child's Rhymes, the riches with which God endows childhood even at its poorest.

He owns the bird-songs of the hills—
The laughter of the April rills;
And his are all the diamonds set
In Morning's dewy coronet,—
And his the Dusk's first minted stars
That twinkle through the pasture-bars
And litter all the skies at night
With glittering scraps of silver light;—
The rainbow's bar, from rim to rim,
In beaten gold, belongs to him.

VIOLIN MAKERS. (17)

A fourteen-year-old boy in Northern New York has a passion for violins, and the making of them. The boy is a natural musician and has played on the violin since he was big enough to hold one. Some months ago he started in to make a violin after the model of the great Stradivarius. He got books from the public library treating on the subject and procured seasoned woods. He lacked tools fine enough for the delicate work, but, with the skill of a genius, he improved the tools he had until they were adequate to his purpose. Then he set to work, getting up at four o'clock in the morning that he might have time for his violin making before school. When the violin was completed he found that it weighed too much according to the Stradivarius standard, and with marvelous patience he took it apart and again smoothed and sand papered its surfaces until it was reduced to the proper weight. The violin was christened not long ago in the boy's home, and all the musicians in the town were present to see and hear his violin, which they declared to be a wonderful work of genius. In a spiritual way every one of us ought to be a musician. There are materials in our own hearts which by the divine help can be wrought into a musical instrument with sweeter tone and wider compass than any violin ever constructed, even by Stradivarius himself. Our christening day will come after a while when Christ shall praise us in the presence of all the ransomed hosts of the skies.

THE WAY OF FAITH. (18)

All important things in this world are carried on by faith. Men build railroads and dispatch trains over them, they build steam ships and ship cargoes in them to distant ports, all through faith. To the Christian faith in God, and in the divine goodness, is the key to every closed door of life. William Kitching helpfully sings this truth in a poem entitled, "The Christian Faith."

A faith that trusts in Jesus' blood,
And proves the promises are good;
A faith that follows where He leads,
Who knows his children's hourly needs—
Such faith be mine!

A faith that trusts no human skill,
My pitcher at the fount to fill;
A faith that conquers in His name,
Who for our full salvation came—
Such faith be mine!

A faith that doth for blessing trust,
Tho' self be humbled in the dust,
And gladly takes the lowest place,
Sustained by undeserved grace—
Such faith be mine!

A faith that, tho the heart be rent,
Doth yet the Mercy Seat frequent,
And finds it in the hour of grief
A place of ever sure relief—
Such faith be mine!

A faith that looks time's shadows through,
And keeps eternity in view;
Yet with the talents God hath lent,
Is on some useful mission bent—
Such faith be mine!

A faith that, when life's day declines,
Can ever read between the lines,
Upon the glorious page,
"How bright the Christian's heritage!"
Such faith be mine!

HOW TO MAKE WORK GLORIOUS. (19)

Dr. Hepworth, in a recent "New York Herald Sermon," says we ought to recognize the fact that all work is honorable, that a man is a high priest of God in whatever sphere he labors. No one is condemned to drudgery. He who does his work grandly and does it with his soul as well as with his hands is making the world better by living in it. It is nobler to lay bricks according to the plumb line than to rule a kingdom badly. The distinction between one man and another is not to be found in social position or the environment of wealth and power, but in the qualities of the heart. The humblest creature that ever lived, whose hoizon is bounded by poverty and obscurity, has a wider prospect for the future if the soul is consecrated than crowned selfishness, though all mankind may look upon it with envy. The artisan and the merchant, the one with slender means, the other with means beyond the reach of arithmetic are equally the servants of God, and there is more eloquence in their daily deeds than ever poured from the lips of the orator. To feel that the work you are now doing is God's work, and must be done with fervor and fidelity, is to stand facing the throne of the Eeternal and to wear the robe of authority.

THE LIFTING OF THE FOG. (20)

Up in the mountains last summer I often noticed in the morning that the fog filled the valleys on every side, so that on the mountain top, where I was three thousand feet above the sea, I seemed to be on an island in the midst of the ocean. The fog shut me in on every hand, yet it never failed, but that the sun as it rose higher in the heavens, lifted the curtain of fog and swept it aside, showing the road by which I might go forth to business or pleasure. The perplexities and difficulties of life are often like that. To our narrow sighted vision there seems to be no escape, but if we wait patiently the fog curtain will be lifted aside. Some one whose name I do not know sings it very picturesquely.

On the Jersey sands I silently muse, as I list to the ocean's roar,
And mark the delicate rim of lace foam-curving on the shore;
Beyond are the valleys and crested peaks of a boundless billowy sea,
Though at my feet falls a vale of mist which hides them all from me.
But the mist shall drift,
And the cloud shall rift,
And the curtain of fleecy fog shall lift.

Bewitchingly fair are the castles we build, as we stand on the threshold of life,
And little think we of the cares of the world, with its sorrows, its toil, and its strife—
Of the mountains to climb, of the deserts to cross, and the perils that often befall.
'Tis well that a Hand all-wise has dropped a curtain concealing them all.
But the mist shall drift,
And the cloud shall rift,
And the curtain of fleecy fog shall lift.

Ah, the day will come—for come it must—when each shall be standing alone,
With a trembling hand and a faltering foot on the shore of a land unknown.
From the ken of men concealed there lies a region beyond the skies,
But soon shall shine that light divine on our wondering raptured eyes.
But the mist shall drift,
And the cloud shall rift,
And the curtain of fleecy fog shall lift.

MODERN HEROISM. (21)

Not long ago on one of the railroads running into Chicago the lightning express was coming down the track. It was the tender's duty to see that the crossing was clear, and to signal that fact to the train with his white flag. He did it, and was slowly backing from the track, still waving his flag, for the day was dark and the engineer might not see till the train was near. From the other side of the track a little girl suddenly came toddling down right in front of the swiftly approaching train. The train was almost upon her when the watchman saw her. He shouted, but she did not hear, or if she did it was too late for her to heed. Even as he shouted, he ran. He knew what it meant. To save her was to loose his life. Yet he rushed right before the train, caught her, threw her with all his might beyond rails, and in that instant met his death. The writer who tells this story comments that this is no tale of knighthood during the age of chivalry. It was no Arthur or Galahad that did this deed, but a knight in old clothes. It is the glory of our common manhood that such qualities lie often unrecognized, and not infrequently latent, in the humblest lives. When they appear now and then, brought into visible shape by some emergency, they glorify not only the one man who is seen to do them or the one exceptional deed which he performs, but all men who so labor with fidelity that may become heroic. The opportunities for acts of signal heroism are exceptional. But the opportunities for fidelity that is essentially heroic are constant.

THE POWER OF RECUPERATION. (22)

Mr. Gladstone once said proudly to a distinguished literary man, "My wife has a marvelous faculty of getting into scrapes, but a more marvelous faculty of getting out of them." That shows the difference between people who succeed and people who do not, as much as anything else. Josh Billings once said that the difference between a wise man and a fool was that the wise man will not do the same fool thing twice, and that is a very important distinction. David was a man after God's own heart, not because he never got into a scrape, nor fell into sin, for he did both, but because when he found he was wrong he was quick to repent and face about to do right.

UNSELFISHNESS. (23)

One of the greatest characteristics of a true soul is unselfishness. Some one has well said: "Most men are like eggs, too full of themselves to hold anything else." This striking and suggestive figure gets at the secret of the failure of many people to get wisdom, and to grow in ability as they grow in years. It is the open mind, the humble heart, the unselfish nature to whom all the world is a teacher, and to whom every day every acquaintance brings some gift to enrich.

THE NEED OF PERSEVERANCE. (24)

Mr. T. P. O'Connor, of the English Parliament, writing of the great Lord Russell, who was perhaps the greatest lawyer in Great Britain in this generation, recalls the fact that Russell began at the bottom, and had a very hard struggle to get on at all at the law for many years. He passed through many experiences of debt and discouragement. On one occasion during these earlier years three young barristers met one day in London and all of them were discouraged. They were sighing for work that did not come, and they debated together what desperate course they would adopt. One talked of India, another of Australia, and the third of going to the United States. Those three young men almost ready to give up were Herschell, who became Lord Chancellor before he was fifty; Gully, who is now speaker of the House of Commons, and Russell, who died Lord Chief Justice. This story ought to encourage any young man who is at the starving point in his career.

THE HEALING PLANT. (25)

There is a plant in Central America which has very remarkable healing qualities in cases of poisoning. The leaves, roots, stems, in fact, all parts of the plant are an infallible antidote against the bites of all poisonous insects and reptiles. Bites of the most venomous snakes are absolutely harmless with this plant at hand. Humboldt says that the native of Guatemala never travels without carrying a small sack of the roots of this plant in his pocket. Thus equipped, he is never molested by insects or reptiles of any sort. There is a plant in the spiritual world that is a certain remedy for the poison of sin. Christ is that Plant, and is a Tree of Life to every one that will lay hold upon him.

LITTLE STORIES FOR GREAT TEXTS.

BY J. R. MILLER, D. D.

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LOVE THE ONLY LADDER. (301)

A Christian woman tells of her experience in making a fuller consecration to Christ. "Did you ever have a person in your house," she asks, "who acted as a perpetual rasp on the feelings of your household? I had. One day when I had nearly lost my faith and was sinking in the black waters of despair, I called on Christ to help me or I would perish. And what do you think he asked me to do? To love this woman. That was the only ladder he offered me up out of the black depths. Then I grew uglier than ever, and almost hated my Saviour. The struggle continued, until I could stand it no longer. In agony I rushed to my closet and besought Jesus to help me. It seemed then as though in a most tender, loving voice, he asked, 'Can't you love her for my sake?' I said, 'Yes, Lord, I will.' At once peace filled my heart. My feelings toward her changed entirely. I had yielded my will to Christ." She had heard the Master's voice, and was following Him. That to which He had called her was not easy—it had in it the print of nails—but it was the way to blessing and joy.

HUMBLE ROYALTY. (302)

A very beautiful story is told of the way the young Princess Victoria bore herself when she first became aware that she might some day be Queen. One morning, when she was twelve years of age, she opened her book of English history and found a paper which had been placed there for her information by her tutor. She read it attentively, and then said to her governess: "I never saw that before. I see that I am nearer the throne than I thought." After pondering a few moments the princess said: "Many children would boast, but they don't know the difficulty. There is much responsibility." The revelation made a deep impression on her mind. More than once she said: "I will be good."

THE WANDERING SPIRIT. (303)

There is a beautiful legend or fancy of a company of beings from the celestial world, who in disguise visited a great city one night on some errand of mercy. When their work was finished they hastily departed, but in some way one of their number, a fair young spirit, was left behind, lost in the strange town. When the people began to move in the streets in the morning they found a sweet boy, with sunny hair, sitting on the steps of the temple. They spoke to him, but he could not understand nor answer them. He replied to their inquiries only with streaming tears and looks of alarm. Presently, however, a slave bearing a harp came among the crowd. The child saw the harp and eagerly reached out his hand to take it. Flinging his arms about it, he embraced it affectionately. Then he began to touch the strings, and wonderful music, pure, clear, melodious, like liquid pearls, fell upon the morning air. This was the language which the celestial stranger knew. In finding the harp he had found a way to express his feelings in language.

We are like lost children in this world, if we do not know our own truer and higher nature. If we live only on earthly lines we are beings of celestial birth strayed from our real home and environment. Everything about us is strange. We do not belong here; heaven is our home. We do not know the language of those who throng round us. When we find ourselves we begin to be at home.

THE HEALING SHADOW. (304)

There is a legend of a good man whom the angels wished to have honored because of the heavenliness of his life. They asked God to give him some new power, and were sent to learn from the man himself what he would choose. He said he wished nothing more than he had; but when importuned to name some new gift which should be bestowed upon him he answered that he would like to have greater power for doing good without knowing it. So it was ordained that his shadow, when it fell behind him, should have healing influence; but when it fell before his face should produce no such effect. It is better that we should not even be aware of the good we are doing. What we do is then unmixed with self, the only name that is honored being Christ's.

OUR LITTLE CORNER. (305)

If one star among all the stars of the sky should fail to shine some night, its light would be missed and there would be a blank in the sky. If one light-house lamp on all the coasts should not be lighted tonight, who can tell what disasters might happen before morning? This is an individual matter. The faithfulness of the multitude will not excuse the

failure of one, the least and the lowliest one. When in the great orchestra the little piccolo did not do its part in the rehearsal the leader stopped everything till the lack was supplied. Not only does Christ in heaven miss the part of one of His who fails to live out his life in the world, but the hungry ones miss the food they crave, and those in darkness miss the light that is not shining, and sorrowing ones miss the comfort they should have received.

HUMAN APPLAUSE. (306)

One of the pictures of the crucifixion of Jesus shows the scene on Calvary after the body had been taken down and laid away in the grave. All is quiet and still. The crowd is gone. No one is seen about the place. There are only the ghastly memorials of the terrible things which had happened during the day. Off to one side of the picture is seen an ass, nibbling at some withered palms that lay there. Thus the artist graphically teaches the fickleness of human applause. Only a few days ago a great throng had followed Jesus over Olivet into the city in triumphant procession, waving their palm branches and strewing them on the road before Him as they shouted their hosannas. Now Jesus is dead, crucified, and here, hard by the cross, lie those faded reminders of that glad day's rejoicing—nothing more. So fickle was men's love for Jesus in those days, and so quickly did their hosannas change to shouts of derision! But is it different today? Do not men's hearts grow warm and tender with love for Christ on Sunday, in a service of devotion, and then by Monday lose all their glad, spiritual enthusiasm? The palm branches of praise and consecration, the green leaves of good resolves and eager intentions, lie withered on the ground, amid the tokens of unfaithfulness and disloyalty.

BEAUTY MARRED BY OLD SINS. (307)

There is a story of a woman whose little child had died, leaving emptiness and great loneliness in the home. The mother had skill in art, and to fill her hands, also in order to preserve the image of the child's lovely features, she devoted herself for many days to touching up with her brush a photograph she had. As she wrought upon the picture the dear face seemed to live again, every charm of expression coming out under her skilled fingers. When the work was finished she laid the photograph away in a drawer. After some days she brought it out again, and was grieved to see blotches here and there on the face. She could not understand it, but she set to work once more with loving patience and restored the marred beauty. In a few days, however, the blotches had reappeared. Then she understood that in the fabric of the paper on which the picture had been taken there were certain elements which, when chemically acted upon by the paints had produced the blotches.

So in even the best human nature, however, deeply imbued and thoroughly cleansed by divine grace, there still lurk elements of the old sinful life, and ever more these evil qualities will work up to the surface and mar and spot the loveliest character.

OUR OWN DUTY FIRST. (308)

If a young woman is a teacher in a school her engagement binds her to perform the duties of her position during certain hours of five days every week, for a definite number of months in the year. There may come to her many opportunities of doing other things. Poor people may need care and help which she could give them. Sick neighbors may require visiting and watching with through long nights, and her heart may prompt her to undertake this ministry of mercy. Mission work may appeal for helpers and she may be eager to enter it, may almost feel that she dare not refuse to do so. It would be easy for her to be always going somewhere on some good errand, filling every moment of her time with work aside from her school duties. But she will make a serious mistake if she thinks that it is her duty to do all these good and beautiful things which make their appeal to her sympathetic heart. Her first thing, that to which God has called her for the time, at least, that which she has convenanted to do, and for which she has been sacredly set apart, is her work as a teacher.

THE PATH OF A GODDESS. (309)

There are some people whose lives are benedictions wherever they go. The peace, joy and love of their hearts make others happier and better. One of the old legends tells of the visits of a goddess to ancient Thebes, and relates that the people always knew when she had been there, although no eye saw her, by the blessings she left behind. She would pause before a lightning-blackened tree, and the tree would be covered with beautiful vines. She would sit down to rest upon a decayed log, and the decay would be hidden under lovely moss. When she stepped on the muddy shores of the sea, violets would spring up in her tracks. This is only a legend, but it illustrates the influence of the beautiful life in which the fruits of the Spirit have full and rich growth. There are lives so full of grace and goodness that every influence they give forth is toward cheer and hope and purity.

POISON BREATHING MAIDEN. (310)

An ancient legend tells of a maiden that was sent to Alexander from some conquered province. She was very beautiful, but the most remarkable thing about her was her breath, which was like the perfume of richest flowers. It was soon discovered, however, that she had

lived all her life amid poison, breathing it, and that her body was full of poison. Flowers given to her withered on her breast. Insects on which she breathed perished. A beautiful bird was brought into her room and fell dead. Fanciful as this story is, there are lives which in a moral sense are just like this maiden. They have become so corrupt that everything they touch is poisoned. Nothing beautiful can live in their presence.

THE INTEREST OF LIFE. (311)

There were two artists, close friends, one of whom excelled in landscape painting and the other in depicting the human figure. The former had painted a picture in which wood and rock and sky were combined in the artist's best manner. But the picture remained unsold—no one cared to buy it. It lacked something. The artist's friend came and said, "Let me take your painting." A few days later he brought it back. He had added a lovely human figure to the matchless landscape. Soon the picture was sold. It had lacked the interest of life. There are some people whose religion seems to have a similar lack. It is very beautiful, faultless in its creed and its worship, but it lacks the human element. It is only landscape, and it needs life to make it complete. No religion is realizing its true mission unless it touches life at its every point.

TREASURES OF LOVE. (312)

There is a home of wealth and splendor in which the most sacred and precious household treasure is a piece of puckered sewing. A little child one day picked up the mother's work—some simple thing she had been making and had laid down—and after a half hour's quiet brought it to the mother and gave it to her, saying, "Mamma, I'se been helping 'ou, 'cause I love 'ou so." The stitches were long and the sewing was drawn and puckered. But the mother saw only beauty in it all, for it told of the child's love and eagerness to help her and please her. That night the little one sickened, and in a few hours was dead. No wonder the mother calls that little piece of puckered sewing one of her rarest treasures. Nothing that the most skillful hands have wrought, nothing of greatest value among all her household possessions, means to her half so much as that piece of spoiled stitching by her child.

May not this be something like the way in which God looks at His children's humblest efforts to do things for him? We are well aware how faulty even the best Christian work done in this world must seem to our Master—how full of unwisdom, of unbeauty, how foolish much of it, how mixed with self and vanity, how untactful, how indiscreet, how without prayer and love, how ignorant, how ungentle. But He does not chide us for it, does not blame us for doing so imperfectly the sacred things He gives us to do. No doubt many of our poor blunders, our most faulty pieces of work, are held among our Master's most sacred, most cherished treasures in heaven.

DEATH RATHER THAN DISHONOR. (313)

"God forbid that I should do this thing and flee away!" said Judas Maccabaeus, when with only eight hundred faithful men he was urged to retire before the Syrian army of twenty thousand. "If our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren, and let us not stain our honor."

"Sore was the battle," writes the historian, "as sore as that waged by the three hundred at Thermopylae, and the end was the same. Judas and his eight hundred were not driven from the field, but lay dead on it."

That seemed a defeat, but there was no dishonor in it. It ranks indeed among the world's noblest achievements. In no victory recorded is there greater glory. The eight hundred died for freedom, and untold blessings came to the nation and to the world from their work that day. Their defeat was but a mode of victory.

HUMAN UPAS TREES. (314)

The upas tree which grows in Java has an acrid, milky juice which contains a virulent poison. According to the story told by a Dutch surgeon, about a hundred years ago, the exhalations of this tree are fatal to both animal and vegetable life. Birds flying over the tree fall dead. No flower or plant will live near it. The story is probably untrue, but it illustrates human lives in this world whose influence always leaves a blight on others. They may be winning and attractive. They may be in the guise of friendship and wear the garb of innocence, but they have absorbed the poison of evil until their very breath is deadly. One cannot be with them, accepting their friendship, or coming under their influence, without being hurt by them. The sweet flowers of purity wither in their presence. There are men and women whose merest touch is defiling, who carry moral blight for other lives wherever they go.

POWER OF A PICTURE. (315)

When Frederick Arnold was writing the life of F. W. Robertson, he went to Brighton to talk with Robertson's friends, to find incidents for his biography. Among other places he went to a bookseller's shop, and learned that the proprietor had been a constant attendant upon Robertson's ministry and had in his parlor a picture of the great preacher.

The bookseller said to Mr. Arnold, "Do you see that picture? Whenever I am tempted to do a mean thing I run back here and look at it. Then I cannot do the mean thing. Whenever I feel afraid of some difficulty or some obstacle, I come and look into those eyes, and I go out strong for my struggle."

If the mere picture of the great preacher has such a power over this humble man, how much more power will a vision of the Christ have in helping us to overcome temptation!

THINGS THAT STRENGTHEN HURT. (316)

Here is an incident from a private letter just received:

"One day, lately, one of my little music pupils, an old-fashioned, sweet little girl about nine years old, was playing scales and octaves when she turned to me and said, "Oh, Miss Graham, my hands are so tired.'

"I said, 'Never mind, Norma; just try to play them once or twice more. The longer you practice them the stronger your hands will grow, so that after a while you will not feel it at all.'

"She turned the gentle little face wearily to me as she said: 'Miss Graham, it seems as if everything that strengthens hurts!'

"I gave her something else, but I thought: "Yes, my dear little girl, everything that strengthens hurts.'"

The child was right. It is true in music, it is true in all art, it is true in the making of character; everything that strengthens hurts, costs pain and self-denial. We must die to live. We must crucify the flesh in order that we may find spiritual gains.

OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES. (317)

It is related of a New England farmer that he put all his combativeness into a rough farm in Massachusetts and made it one of the best. Once a friend said to him, "I should think that with your love of farming you would like to have a more productive soil to deal with—in some Western State, for instance."

"I should hate farming in the West," he said vigorously. "I should hate to put my spade into the ground where it did not hit against a rock."

There are many men who would find no pleasure in life if it were only and always easy. Their chief delight is experienced in meeting obstacles and overcoming them. A hindrance in their path arouses the best that is in them in the effort to master it.

FRIENDS MARCHING BY. (318)

There is a pathetic story from crusading annals which illustrates many an experience in common life. A crusader, returning from the Holy Land, is seized by some nobles while crossing hostile territory, and is cast into prison. In his cell, one day, some months after the beginning of his captivity, he hears sounds of faraway martial music. As he listens eagerly, he knows that the music is drawing nearer. He looks out through the grating of his cell, and by and by the flash of spears is seen. Nearer and nearer still comes the column, and then, with wild emotion, the captive discovers that it is his own party, the same company of men with whom he had gone to war, with whom he had fought on sacred ground in Palestine. He cries out as the men ride close to his window, cries yet more loudly, but the music drowns his voice. They ride on till all have passed, the banners moving out of sight. The last note of the receding music falls on his ear, and the poor captive is left alone in his hopelessness.

There are many men who, by reason of broken health or some sore misfortune, or through narrow limitations, are shut up in a dark prison, and compelled to lie there, from their dim windows seeing their former companions march by them with gay banners and cheerful music, and pass out of sight. It is not easy to keep one's spirit brave and strong in such an experience. The weariness is apt to become faintness, and the faintness to pass into the well-night incurable sickness of despair.

GEMS HIDDEN IN SERVICE. (319)

A traveller in South Africa tells of picking up a rough pebble. As he turned it over in his hand his trained eye saw the gleaming of a diamond. Duty may have a rough, an unattractive crust, but he who accepts it and looks at it through eyes of love sees in it a service for Christ which will yield the heavenly treasure of peace and joy.

FRUITFULNESS. (320)

The life that is complete in God's sight must be a life rich in blessing to others. Uselessness never can be pleasing to the Master. Jesus said much about fruit—fruitfulness is the test of a life. Neither the strength nor the beauty of a seed is in itself. Imagine an acorn, which has been picked up by some one, carried into a beautiful room and laid on the mantel-piece, congratulating itself on its escape from the usual fate of acorns—falling into the ground to be buried away in the darkness. Imagine it saying: "How fortunate I am! Here I have a warm home in a dry and cheerful place. I lie in this quiet room all day and people see my beauty. How I pity other acorns which have to stay out in the cold and

rain and sink away into the muddy earth!" Yet we know well that this acorn's lot is by no means enviable. It is kept dry and safe, but it never can reach God's thought for it in this way. Only when it gives itself away to die in the earth does it become either truly beautiful or strong. Then it grows into a majestic oak whose strength defies the wildest storms and whose beauty wins the admiration of all who behold it.

GOD'S WILL BETTER THAN GRANDEUR. (321)

In one of his poems Browning tells of a boy who wrought at the poor trade whereby his daily bread was earned, working hard and long and well, praising God continually. One day, however, discontent came into the boy's heart and he wished he might praise God in some grand way. His wish was granted, and his place became empty. Then Gabriel sped to earth, and in flesh took up the boy's tasks, doing them with his own hands and praising God in the boy's place. There, year after year, he lived,

> And ever o'er the trade he bent,
> And ever lived on earth content.
>
> (He did God's will; to him all one
> If on the earth, or in the sun.)

The poem tells also how the boy for years served in the grand place he had coveted. But his service there, though amid pomp and splendor, was never so acceptable to God, nor so great in God's sight, as had been his work at his lowly trade when he was doing God's will.

God's will is always the finest, greatest thing possible for us any day, though to human thought it be earth's lowliest taskwork. With God, high and low are not different classes of service, but different ways of doing his will. Those who do humblest things beautifully and praisingly, because they are what God has sent for the day, rank far higher than those who do great things which get the world's praise, but are not God's plan for them.

ROBBING GOD. (322)

The story about old Stradivarius, the violin maker, is suggestive. He said that if his hand slackened in its work of making violins, he would rob God, and leave a blank instead of good violins. He said that even God could not make Antonio's violins without Antonio. This is true of every one of us in our particular occupation. God depends upon our faithfulness. Even He cannot do our work well without us. If our hand slacks at any point, if we grow careless and do less than our best, we are robbing God.

The truth has wide application. It may be applied to every life and to every piece of work that any of us do. One is engaged in a factory, one in a machine shop, one in an office, one in a store, one on a farm, one is at school. One man is a physician, another is a lawyer, another a merchant, another a mechanic, another a minister. Whatever our work is we cannot be faithful to God unless we do it as well as we can. To slur it is to do God's work badly. To neglect it is to rob God. The affairs of the universe do not go on quite perfectly without your little work done well, if it be only blacking shoes, mending streets, digging in the garden, or dusting a room.

FAITHFULNESS MAY STOP A FLOOD. (323)

Stories are told of a child finding a little leak in the dike that shuts off the sea from Holland, and stopping it with his hand until help could come, staying there all night holding back the flood. It was but a tiny, trickling stream that the boy held back, yet if he had not done it, it would soon have become a torrent, and before morning the sea would have swept over the land, submerging fields, homes and cities. Between the sea and all this devastation there was only a boy's hand all night long. Had the child failed in his duty the floods would have rolled in with their remorseless ruin. We understand how important it was that that boy should be faithful, since he was the only one God had that night to hold the sea back.

Do you know that any common day your life may not stand, and be all that stands between some great flood of moral ruin and broad, fair fields of beauty? Do you know that your failure to be faithful in your lowly place may not let in a sea of disaster which shall sweep away human hopes and joys? There ought to be tremendous uplift and inspiration in this thought. We never know when we hold great interests in our keeping, nor what depends upon our being faithful. We read of moments in the lives of other people when far-reaching issues hung upon a decision, or a word, or a single act. But we forget that issues just as important may depend upon what we do or say any moment of any day.

IN THE HEART OF A FRIEND. (324)

It was a beautiful fancy of our gentle poet, that the song he had breathed into the air, which fell to the earth, he knew not where, he found again, long, long afterwards, in the heart of a friend. Friendship is ever breathing its sweet songs into the air; and so, too, shall it find them all again, from beginning to end, in the hearts into which they fall. Nothing that love does is ever lost. The time we spend with pure and good friends, in sacred communings or in the cultivation and deepening of noble friendships is not lost. It brings us not only present passing enjoyment, but also permanent enrichment.

PROVING OUR PROFESSION. (325)

It is related of a great artist that he was once wandering in the mountains of Switzerland when some officials met him and demanded his passport. "I do not have it with me," he replied, "but I am Dore." "Prove it, if you are," replied the officers, knowing who Dore was, but not believing that it was he. Taking a piece of paper, he hastily sketched a group of peasants who were standing near, and did it with such grace and skill that the officials exclaimed, "Enough; you are Dore."

The world cares little for a mere profession. We say we are Christians, and the challenge is, "Prove it." If we are of Christ we must be able to do the works of Christ, to live the life of Christ, to show the spirit of Christ. The artist's skillful drawing proved his identity. We must prove that we are the followers of our Master by the love, the grace, the beauty, the holiness of our life.

THE VALUE OF GROWTH. (326)

We are in this world to grow. A gentleman was once addressing a school and asked what boys were good for. One little fellow answered promptly, "To make men, sir." No better answer could have been given. A boy is of great use as a boy, if he be a good one—manly, noble, pure-minded, true and diligent. He may do a great deal of good while he is growing up. Many boys live a beautiful life and do things which give comfort and cheer in their homes. Many do heroic things and kindly things. The years while a boy is waiting to become a man need not be lost or wasted. Yet boyhood is not the end. It is only the period of growth and of training. The purpose of a boy is to become a man.

INFLUENCE OF A LOST BOOK. (327)

The other day a lady, doing now a noble work as a teacher, said that only that morning she had come upon a book which was given her on the day of her graduation from the school in which she was prepared for college. She had not seen the book for more than ten years—it had been lying among unused things. She turned over the pages and found nearly every paragraph marked. As she went on she remembered that in her early college days she had read the book every day, taking its words into her very life, and now she was astonished to discover how it had influenced her. All the best things in her life and character, she said, had been inspired by the words of that volume. The book had its mission to her at a particular time in her life, and it had wrought its ministry well and then had been laid aside. In like manner all of us are influenced by certain books which for a little while we almost live upon, eating them, as it were. Then they are laid aside, left behind, never to be taken up any more. They have done their work in us, and we need them no longer. Other books now bring to us other lessons and lead us in new paths.

The same is true of many of life's friendships. They have their days and pass out of our life, but what they have wrought in us we shall keep, forever. We need not consider a friendship lost or broken because its closeness and intimacy are no longer maintained. Its active ministry may have ceased and yet its work in us have been most enriching; its ties may still be intact, and it should be sacredly cherished among God's best gifts to us.

GENERAL HOWARD'S REWARD. (328)

A beautiful story is told of two great generals in the American Civil War. During General Sherman's last campaign in the South, certain changes in commanders were made. General Howard was placed at the head of a special division. Soon after this the war closed and there was to be a grand review of he army at Washington. The night before the review Sherman sent for Howard and said: "The political friends of the officer you succeeded are determined that he shall ride at the head of the corps, and I want you to help me out."

"It is my command," said Howard, "and I am entitled to ride at its head."

"Of course you are," replied Sherman. "You led the men through Georgia and the Carolinas; but, Howard, you are a Christian, and can stand the disappointment."

"If you put it on that ground," said Howard, "there is but one answer. Let him ride at the head of the corps."

"Yes, let him have the honor," said Sherman, "but you will report to me at nine o'clock and will ride by my side at the head of the army."

Howard protested, but his commander's orders were positive. So that day, in the grand review, the man who had yielded his rights had a place of higher honor at the head of the whole army. It is ever thus—the meek inherit the earth; those who forget themselves and serve without striving for place, in the end receive the truest honor before both God and man.

SAVIOUR FROM WEAKNESS AND FAILURE. (329)

One of the legends of the life of Jesus tells of a day when he was walking beside the sea, when suddenly a sea-bird, driven by a storm that had been sweeping on the farther shore, came fluttering towards him, and, panting, fell on the sand at his feet and died. Then he took the bird and laid it in his hand and breathed on it—when lo! the bird fluttered a moment and then flew aloft, its life restored. It is only a legend, and yet it was just in this gentle way that Jesus dealt always with human weakness and failure which fled to Him out of life's storms.

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We think it worth while to call your attention to this issue of Current Anecdotes, especially the new features, Dr. Banks and the other departments that have been running are old enough to speak for themselves, if you have not already heard their voices. "Little stories for Great Texts" by J. R. Miller, D. D., will please all those who desire a variety, and for spiritually and definite teaching are unexcelled. This is the first of our special contributions, and we are sure we will receive many a silent vote of thanks for it. The special contributor for next month will be J. Wilbur Chapman, and to those who know him it will not be necessary to state that he will be equal to Dr. Miller.

There is the new department of methods! Mr. Cook's matter this month is chiefly introductory, but he gives you enough to set you thinking, and some ideas set in motion will chase your cares and anxieties away.

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By James M. Gray, D. D.

Sterling, Ill., Sept. 4, 1900.

I conducted a Bible Study Class in my own church last year following Dr. Gray's plan of synthetic study of the Bible as published in the Union Gospel News. A large class was enrolled and the attendance was exceptionally good to the end.

Every one was delighted with the plan and I had no difficulty in sustaining the interest throughout the course.

I have followed a number of methods of teaching Bible classes, but this is by far the most successful one I have ever used. It has created a new interest in the study of the Bible in our church and thus been a great blessing to us. I want to add my hearty testimony to the excellence of the method.

Sincerely yours, J. F. Horton,
Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Sterling, Ill.

DEPARTMENT OF METHODS

DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE DISCUSSION OF METHODS OF CHURCH WORK.

Conducted by ELLISON R. COOK.

(Motto: Not What but How.)

By Way of Indication.

As indicated above, this department will be devoted exclusively to the discussion of methods and plans of church work. There are books and periodicals without number, in which the importance of Christian effort and the imperative need of efficient Christian workers is set forth. There has been abundant discussion of the what and why and wherefore. Reaching a constituency which already has clearly defined convictions concerning what is needed, we shall undertake to tell how the work is to be done.

Whatever the creed, whatever the form of government, church work is a unit everywhere, and all are alike interested in the presentation and discussion of plans for carrying on that work.

We claim no superior wisdom entitling us to be heard as to the "how" of church work. We propose simply to avail ourselves of the advantages that all specialists have in any art, profession or business. We have given some of the best years of our life to the study of methods of church work and to gathering information from every source accessible to us. We have in store much material upon which we can draw, and at the same time we will put ourselves in communication with the most successful workers in every department of church enterprise, and learn of their present methods. We will solicit contributions on special lines from time to time; will clip freely from a large list of valuable exchanges the best articles which discuss the "How" of anything practical in church work; and thus we hope to make this department a depository of the best thoughts, the wisest plans and most successful methods that the collected wisdom and experience of all the advanced Christian workers of our time can furnish.

It shall be our effort to make every article practical. Forms and illustrations will be given when necessary and every detail will be made plain. To any pastor or Christian worker who aims to accomplish the greatest good, and secure the best results this department can but prove suggestive, stimulating and helpful. Our columns will be open for full discussion and free interchange of opinion concerning the "How" of church work in all its departments. We will also undertake to answer, or have answered, any question relating to methods or plans of church work. It is our desire to see the "children of light in their generation" show something of the wisdom in planning and the energy of execution which distinguish the "children of this world." Lend us a helping hand, not for our sake, but for the sake of the work, and for His sake "whose we are and whom we serve."

Importance of Method in Church Work.

One of the strange things which must impress a thoughtful inquiring mind is that men who are systematic, careful and up-to-date in the conduct of their own private business, seem to think, when entrusted with the Lord's business, that "any old thing will do." An old brother in the mountains of North Georgia, with more zeal than knowledge, whose custom it was to cry out "Amen" to almost any emphatic statement made from the pulpit, and who sometimes said "Amen" most inoppportunely, on several occasions convulsing the congregation with laughter. His pastor spoke to him on the subject and the old brother promised to be more careful. The very next day—it was during revival services—the pastor preached a warm sermon, which stirred the old man, but he did his best to suppress his feelings. Finally, however, when he could stand it no longer, he cried out at the top of his voice "Amen, hit or miss."

So with not a few members of the church, when it comes to the work of the church, it's an "Amen," perhaps, but a haphazard, "hit or miss" Amen. No business known among men could be kept from miserable failure if conducted in the hit or miss, haphazard way in which so much church work is undertaken. Nothing but the fact that the work is Divine enables it to stand at all.

In saving the world we become co-laborers with a God who declares Himself and reveals Himself a God of order. In His Kingdom, both natural and spiritual, order reigns. There is method, design, plan in everything. God has methods of grace, methods of providence, a plan of salvation, which all nature is an illustration of, method in the operation of power. Harmony of action, therefore, demands that the human part of the work should be undertaken and carried forward orderly and systematically. "Let all things be done decently and in order" is Paul's injunction, and experience demonstrates that the pastor whose work is in accord with this direction is the man whose labors are most blessed of God.

It is, of course, always understood that without the Holy Ghost to energize and sanctify, all methods and plans are dead and fruitless. "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." And yet this Divine power does not supercede the necessity for means. "The more full the gifts and divine breathings of the Spirit, the busier we should be in the use of reason and judgment, energy, talents and all those gifts which, sanctified by the spirit, may be used for the glory of God and the good of man." Effort without prayer is presumption, but prayer without effort is mockery.

"The lack of well defined plans always results in unnecessary complications, and brings meager returns, leaving the most earnest efforts without merited effectiveness."

It is with these convictions that we give ourselves to this work. We believe that the successful worker is the man who, while he depends for the power of God, plans and works as though everything depended on the wisdom of his plans and the earnestness of his work.

Ruts and How to Get Out.

(1) Don't get in.
(2) If in find it out.
(3) Earnestly desire to get out.
(4) Be unhappy about it.
(5) Study how to get out.
(6) Lay plans to get out.
(7) Execute plans to get out.
(8) When out, stay out.
(9) Don't look that way again.

Not long ago a man asked me, "What is the trouble with that church?" and I answered "Ruts." Not "Rats," but "Ruts." Then he said: "What do you mean?" and I replied, "the trouble with 'that' church is that its leading members hold on to methods which were antiquated fifty years ago. They have made the mistake of thinking that 'fogyism' is piety, that rust is religion. They will have nothing that is new for no other reason than because it is not old. Like the man in the story, who tied a rock in one end of his sack, put corn in the other, and said, when he was shown that he would save time and trouble by putting corn in the place of the rock, "My daddy tied the rock in it and I reckon what was good enough for him will do for me." There are more men than one might imagine who use exactly the same kind of logic in meeting any suggestion for a forward movement or a new plan in the work of the church.

One of the most stubborn hindrances to progress in the church is the tenacity with which many good people hold to old methods, which have been superceded by entirely new conditions.

Many such are as reasonable in their position, as the old lady who lived all her life in Richmond County, Georgia, until a new line run by the surveyor cut her house off into the county below. She sold out and moved, giving as her reason that Burke County she had always heard was the "sickliest county in Georgia, and she did not propose to live in it a day longer than was necessary to dispose of her belongings."

Innovation upon doctrine is to be resisted, but change of methods becomes absolutely necessary with change of environment. It is neither safe nor sensible to hold on to a thing after it has served its purpose and outlived its usefulness just simply because it is old. Paul said, and Paul was not only a wise man, but an inspired man, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." He is not a wise man who holds fast to a thing just because it once served a good purpose, when he might have a better thing suited to his present need and adapted to present conditions. Some one has wisely said, "Adoration of fogyism is a species of idolotry not to be gloried in, nor yielded to by sensible people." What we need today is to carefully study methods, the use of which have proven successful, select plans that meet present conditions, and then resolutely work these methods and execute these plans. We need to keep in mind the fact that there are no automatic, self-acting plans for church work—methods won't work themselves. The reason why so many wisely selected and carefully digested plans fail is not because of defect in the plan, but because the plan was not carried out. The failure is chargeable to neglect.

U. R. Wright.

How to Make a Working Church.

Under this general heading we shall give from month to month methods of organization and plans for aggressive work gathered from various sources. In this day of institutional church and city organization the great importance of systematic work in our rural districts is in danger of being overlooked. We shall, for the present, devote much of our space to plans of orgainzation and methods of work specially adapted to our churches in the smaller towns and in country places.

When plans are under discussion it is often said, "Oh, yes, that works well in the city churches, but it won't do in the country." The result of this general impression is that in too many country churches there are no plans, no system of work and consequently no progress.

Human nature is the same the world over, and while plans must be adopted to suit existing conditions, systematic, united work will bear fruit in the country as well as in the city.

We meet the great problem in the country as in town, "How may we reach the non-church-going population?" There are varied conditions in different places which modify the methods to be employed, but there are some plans which involve principles of universal application.

First of all, if a pastor would succeed in this work of evangelization, he must have some knowledge of the people whom he wishes to reach. The name and place of residence of families who are not identified with any church may be obtained by putting in the hands of carefully selected committees plain blank cards, on which they are to write the name and address of the non-church-goer, with such additional information as may be necessary.

Having secured a list of those who rarely, if ever, attend church, and those out of the church, let the pastor send to each, through the mail, or by this same committee, a neat card of invitation to attend the services of your church. Your local printer will do the work at reasonable cost. There are many forms; the following we have found effective:

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—*Bible.*

"Come thou with us and we will do thee good."

"Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is."—*Paul.*

BETHEL, M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH

J. B. ALLGOOD, Pastor

Preaching every Lord's Day morning and evening
Sunday School 9 a. m. every Sunday.
Prayer meeting Wednesday evening.

AN INVITATION.

We extend to you, and through you whom you may invite, a cordial invitation to attend the above services. We will give you a warm welcome and try to do you good.

"Oh come let us Worship and bow down: Let us Kneel before the Lord our Maker."—*Ps. xcb, 6.*

The judicious use of such cards will increase a congregation in city, town or country. The writer once used these cards with most gratifying results on a country charge of four churches. A number of conversions and accessions to the church occurred among those who were thus brought to attend Divine worship.

In connection with this work, appoint a committee to co-operate with the pastor in visiting from house to house. The territory contiguous to the church should be divided into districts and a brother or sister appointed to each district. They should make weekly reports to the pastor, calling his special attention to cases of sickness or when in their judgment an early visit from the pastor would do good.

The man who establishes a bar-room in a rural district or elsewhere does not neglect, through the press or by card or hand-bill, to invite residents to visit his place. "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

As ambassadors of Jesus Christ we are not responsible for the rejection of our message of invitation, but we are under obligation to put forth every effort to bring the gospel in immediate contact with the masses. We may not be instrumental in saving one in ten of those we thus seek, but our duty to go out after them is plain.

Next month we shall give a plan for the organization of a village church, the practical working of which was attended with most gracious results.

Annual Roll-Call and Rally.

The roll of membership should be called in every church at least once a year. It not only aids the pastor and officials to keep in touch with the members, but may prove a means of grace to individual Christians. We beg to submit a plan for making such a service interesting and profitable, instead of dry and dull, as is too often the case.

Announce the service and magnify its importance. Have a neat invitation printed and mail one to every member of the church. We suggest the following form:

REUNION

First Baptist Church and Congregation,
Sunday, Oct. 26, 11 a. m.

You are cordially invited to be present at our Annual Reunion. All our members are specially requested to attend with their families. If providentially prevented, send a brief written message, that it may be read when your name is called.

A. Goodman, Pastor.

If the invitation be printed in the form of a four-page folder and contain a program something like the following, so much the better:

Order of Service.

Song—Blest be the Tie That Binds Our Hearts in Christian Love.

Scripture Reading—"In Judah is God known." Ps. 76.

Prayer.

Brief Review of Year's Work and Plans for the Future—The Pastor.

Song—"Work for the Night is Coming."

"Our Sunday School"—The Superintendent.

Song—"To the Work, to the Work."

"The Official Board and Its Work"—The Chairman.

Roll Call.

Voluntary Test, Responses and Testimonies.

Reading of Letters from Absent Members.

Song—"All Hail the Power of Jesus Name."

Benediction.

The following verses of scripture are most appropriate for use on the printed invitation:

"All that believed were together." Acts 2:44.

"All the people gathered themselves together as one man." Neh. 8:1.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." 1 Sam. 6:12.

"Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before." Phil. 3:13.

These invitations sent out, the people will come. Let the prayers and talks be brief and to the point. Have the reports from the various departments of church work very concise.

See to it that no one in the voluntary testimony occupies longer than one minute, and there will be time sufficient to carry out the program, and leave at least half an hour for hand-shaking and conversation.

Appoint before hand a committee of three men and three ladies, whose special duty it shall be to introduce members of the congregation present, who may be unacquainted. Let the pastor pass through the crowd and if possible speak to every person present. The Rally, Reunion or Annual Roll-Call (as you elect to call it) will result in uniting the people more closely in Christian fellowship, quicken every interest of the church and strengthen the hold of the pastor on his people.

Practical Suggestions for Revival Services.

The first work is to prepare the minds and hearts of the people for co-operation in the special efforts to be made.

1. By preaching to the church. Compel Christians for the time being to forget the impenitent in their great concern about their own condition before God as unfaithful to Christ in love and service. A time of heart-searching and penitence and confession on the part of the church will be invariably followed by concern for their souls on the part of the impenitent.

2. Arrange a half hour for concert of prayer among the mothers in the church. They will pray for an outpouring of the spirit, and the salvation of their children.

3. Send a card to your official members inviting them to a special meeting one-half hour before the Sabbath morning service. You need not state for what purpose. Write the invitation for the first meeting. Do not seek the advice of anyone. Do this one thing without asking advice of a committee. Open your heart to your brethren. Open your heart to the Lord. Take each name to the Lord in your prayer, and let the prayer flow out over the coming service. The coming of the official brethren at the same time into the church will be a new and inspiring experience. Unite them, if possible, in a covenant to pray for each other and the church.

4. Call the Sunday school superintendent and teachers together and get them concerned for the salvation of the children. Arrange for an hour's meeting of like character for the officers and active workers in your Young People's Society. Thus get circles of prayer started, different interests enlisted, many "twos or threes agreed as touching one thing."

5. Select out of your official board, Sunday School, Epworth League and Ladies' Societies the most devoted and consecrated workers; invite them to meet you in your study. Make a list of the unconverted members of your Sunday School and congregation, discuss the several cases and then assign to such persons as were ready to undertake it the pleasant duty of calling upon, or writing an affectionate letter to such persons as they may select from this list. These personal appeals will be blessed in many cases to the conversion of the impenitent, or to the recovery of backsliders.

6. Interest your young men and others in the work of inviting the people to the services. Supply them with neat and attractive cards of invitation.

We give below a unique form of invitation:

It has been said: "Large results render imperative the employment of methods, but the methods should conform to the needs." In revivals, too much should not be dependent upon the manner of doing, but this does not mean that no methods are to be employed. Some methods are better than others. We believe that the above methods adapted to your peculiar needs, with earnest prayer for God's blessing and Divine guidance faithfully carried out, will almost invariably bring gracious results.

The Spirit and the Bride say COME.

And let Him that is athirst COME.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE . . . . . .

REVIVAL MEETINGS

NOW IN PROGRESS AT

BROADWAY METHODIST CHURCH,

Broadway, between 13th and 14th Streets.

ELLISON R. COOK, Pastor,

Services Every Day at 10 A. M. and 8 P. M.

The Pastor is assisted by Rev. Ed. F. Cook, of Savannah. Mr. John F. Hendrix, the blind singer, will render one or more of his touching and beautiful solos at every service.

COME AND BRING YOUR FRIENDS.

And let Him that Heareth say COME.

And Whosoever will let Him COME.

HOW TO RAISE CHURCH FUNDS.

The Pauline plan for providing for the financial needs of the church.

"Now concerning the collection for the saints: As I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him that there be no gathering when I come." I Cor. xvi-1:2.

It has been well said that this order of the apostle comprises every point that could well be suggested as necessary for a complete ordinance on the subject of giving.

First. It is enjoined by apostolic authority and was evidently meant to apply not only to Corinth and the churches of Galatia, but to the church universal, since the principles upon which it is based are of universal applicability.

Second. It is the dictate of inspired wisdom and meets perfectly the end proposed in the philanthropic work of Christianity. In fact, it is the old law of tithers and offerings which God had given the Jewish church, modified by the same Divine authority to suit it to the changed conditions of the New Dispensation.

Third. Let us note some of the points of agreement between this rule and the requirements of the former dispensations. From the very first age of the world, one of the religious duties required of man was that of offering on each Sabbath a portion of his possessions to the Lord. In patriarchal times the father of the family, as priest in his own house, paid his tithe in the very act of worship. When this custom was modified under the law, as published by Moses, and public worship was instituted it was ordained that none should come before the Lord empty. The pious Jew regularly brought his tithes and offerings to the temple or to the synagogue in which he worshipped every Sabbath.

Now, in recognition of this immutable Divine requirement when the great apostle of the Gentiles came to describe to the Gentile church the application of this law to the new dispensation, he gives order in this form: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come." Here it will be observed that the first day—the Christian Sabbath—is the substitute for the Jewish Sabbath as the time of contribution; the funds thus accumulated to be kept "in store" for such religious uses as the necessities of Christ's Kingdom might call for.

Thus the essential principle of the original law was perpetuated, the form of its application only being changed. This much then is clear: One of the essential principles which the apostle's rule establishes is, "The act of giving is an act of worship." The early disciples of Jesus, trained from childhood in the system of tithes and temple offerings, would have thought it strange to gather in a place of worship, to pray and sing and read the word, and yet "come empty before the Lord." And these Gentile converts, taught by the great apostle, and familiar as they were with the universal custom of gifts and libations, even in heathen worship learned the same lesson and faithfully observed it. "How the church grew in those days. All were active, few were rich; yet the Lord's treasury was never empty, and the church won the admiration of the heathen by its acts of benevolence. How the church in later days went widely astray from the divinely inculcated principles, and has so long groped in blindness in regard to this vital matter, is one of the painful mysteries of its modern history. But when we remember how long the church remained in utter darkness as to the real significance of the great commission, "Go ye unto all the world and preach the gospel to every nation," we are not much surprised that it has suffered itself to be blinded by the god of the world, as to the true relation of money to this great enterprise.

Would you solve the financial problem in your church and bring giving to be what God designed it should be, a means of grace, spiritually helpful to the giver, then, first of all enforce this command as you do other duties enjoined upon Christians. Take the position that this command is as binding as is any other injunction to be found in the Epistles of Paul. It is nowhere in the New Testament abrogated and it is the duty of the pastor and official members of the church to adopt some practical plan inculcating this principle of systematic beneficence and thus provide a way whereby every member—rich and poor, old and young—may meet the spirit and letter of the command.

Second. Insist that the stewards or those whose duty it is to "serve the tables" adopt a plan which will reach every member of the church. It is vastly better to get one dollar from each of one hundred members, than a hundred from two or three. Additional fountains are opened up, which will probably continue to flow with an ever increasing stream. The blessing also is distributed. the success of more than one church that could be named, in raising large sums of money is not accounted for by their wealth, but by the fact that under this scriptural plan all the people give. Let the officials of any church adopt, and themselves conform to this Pauline plan, and the congregation will be able to meet its obligations without the strain and worry under the prevailing lack of method. In a word, conformity to God's law always insures well-being; disregard of it results in confusion and ultimate loss.

In the November number of "Current Anecdotes" we will present the practical side of this question, giving the experience of a successful business man—a steward—telling just how the Pauline plan may be introduced and successfully operated in any church. This one article will be well worth a year's subscription to this magazine.

"No one need feel discouraged about this war business. Every one can help a little at least." "How so?" "Well, those who don't go to the front to whip the Filipinos can stay at home and lick the revenue stamps."

The Sunday-school class was singing "I want to be an angel." "Why don't you sing louder, Bobby?" asked the teacher. "I'm singing as loud as I feel," exclaimed Bobby.

How to Secure the Missionary and Other Benevolent Collections Ordered by General Boards.

This is a question of vital interest to pastors, since upon them devolves in very many churches the responsibility for raising these collections.

The crippled financial condition of our various religious boards is a natural result of the lack of system in securing the contributions of the individual members of our churches. Giving will not become systematic of itself. It must be made systematic and this implies order and method. If any fair proportion of the membership of a church contributes to its various benevolent causes, every individual must be reached and given opportunity to give.

In most of our churches the responsibility for raising funds necessary to carry on the aggressive enterprises of the church is put on the pastor. If he succeeds he must adopt some plan by which he in turn can put the responsibility of giving on each individual member. He is under obligation to bring to the attention of all, every cause he represents and provide a plan by which each member may give according to ability. When he does this faithfully and systematically, success usually crowns his efforts. In any event, the pastor has discharged his obligation, and if there is failure the fault is not his. Too many pastors have absolutely no system at all, and consequently to the great mass of the membership the blessedness of giving is entirely lost.

It is a singular fact that admirable systems often break down right at the point of contact with the givers. To illustrate: In the Methodist Episcopal churches, which are connectional the General Conference estimates the aggregate sums needed for the various interests of the church and assesses each annual Conference. the annual Conference pro rates its assessment on the presiding elders' district, the district stewards then assess each pastoral charge and finally a stated amount is put upon each church. so far the system works beautifully, but now instead of following the general plan and assessing each individual member of each church, it is frequently the case that not more than one-tenth of an entire membership contributes to these causes.

The following plan should be adopted by every pastor:

A circular letter setting forth the claims and needs of the various enterprises should be put in the hands of every member. The letter can be sent through the mails, or distributed by committees. Printed envelopes should be enclosed and specific instructions given as to how and when the contributions should be handed in.

There are several excellent plans—the most important point is that the responsibility is put upon the individual—that an appeal is made to every one and the duty of all alike giving "according to ability."

We have never known a pastor who did this to fail.

It is our purpose from time to time to give some of these plans in detail, printing a form of circular letter and giving the best forms of collection cards and envelopes, etc. They can but prove helpful and suggestive to the up-to-date pastor. If you want to keep up with the best methods of the most successful pastors you must have "Current Anecdotes and Methods of Church Work."

A SPECIAL REQUEST.

It is our desire to make this department as practical and helpful to pastors as is possible. To this end we want the co-operation of our subscribers and come now to beg that you will kindly mail to the address below specimens of your local church paper, programs of special services, church invitation cards, forms of collection cards, pastoral letters, year books, leaflets, revival announcements and, indeed, anything in the way of church printing.

Brief statement of your methods and the success which has attended the use of the forms sent will also be much appreciated. Due credit will be given for any forms or plans we may publish.

We will gladly repay you in kind.

ELLISON R. COOK.
Dahlonega, Ga.

A PRAYER BY JOHN KNOX.

"And becawse Thow haste commanded us to pray one for another, we do not onely make requeste, O Lord, for ourselves and theym that Thow haste already called to the trew understandinge of Thy Heavenly wyll, but for all people and nations of the world, who as they knowe by Thy wonderfull workes that Thow arte God over all, so they may be instructed by Thy Holy Spirite to believe in Thee their onely Saviour and Redeemer. But for as moche as they cannot beleve except they heare, nor cannot heare but by preaching, and none can preache, except they be sent; therefore, O Lord, rayse up faithful distributers of Thy mysteries, who, setting aparte all worldly respectes, may bothe in theyr lyfe and doctrine onely seke Thy glorie."—John Knox. (824)

Dean Farrar, of Canterbury, England, contributed an important and suggestive article to the September Magazine Number of The Outlook, called "Theological Changes of View in England." ($3 a year. The Outlook Company, New York.)

The Vest Pocket Commentary on the Sunday School Lessons for 1901, by Deloss M. Tompkins, D. D., is in print. This little book is a marvel of helpfulness. From the first edition brought out in 1899 to the present it has made constant progress. The author and publisher have not only improved the character of the book, but have reduced the price. It is now bound in Keratol Morocco, Seal grain, with gold edges and stamp, for 25 cents; the same interleaved with ruled paper for notes, 50 cents. We believe the busy Sunday school worker will look long and far before finding a better investment for so small a sum. Sample pages free. Fred. D. Ewell, publisher, 126 Market St., Chicago.

How the First Presbyterian Church of Wichita, Kansas, Increased its offerings to Foreign Missions from $300 to $3,000 per annum.

By CHARLES EDWIN BRANT, Pastor.

I. If the members of our churches are to be aroused to an interest in this work, foreign missions must be presented as an enterprise which concerns every individual Christian. Foreign missions have been and are too generally relegated to the hands of women and children for support, and very few of them feel much responsibility for the work,—not one in a dozen.

Christ, in His Word, fastens the responsibility for the evangelization of every creature upon His disciples without exception. Hence, if missions are to be managed on a Bible basis, such a policy must be adopted as will place the responsibility where it properly belongs, viz., upon the individual members of the church. This responsibility for each individual runs along three lines—Praying, Going, Giving.

Christ said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Christ said, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into His harvest."

Christ said, "Give ye them to eat."

Thus, as we read the words of Christ on this subject, we find that it was clearly His plan to have every person who become His follower, impressed with the teaching that he was henceforth a responsible party for the furthering of the Gospel to the uttermost part of the earth. He not only intended that the Gospel should be preached to every creature, but that it should be preached by every Christian. He has emphasized this by (1) direct commands, (2) clear examples, and (3) a striking Providence.

II. Again, if the members of our churches are to be aroused to a greater interest in this work, foreign missions must be presented as the greatest business enterprise of all time. It is the great and peculiar business of God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. And according to God's Word and Christ's command, it should be the great and peculiar business of God's people to "teach all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost." Christ looked upon this work as the greatest business enterprise of all ages. But how does the church look upon it? I mean by the church the leaders in the churches, that is, the minister and elders. They look upon this greatest work in the universe as an enterprise to be supported by a nickel and dime collection to be taken once or twice a year in our churches, or to be sustained by some 2-cent-a-week scheme, which, if it worked, would net the "enormous amount" of $1.04 a year per member; or to be extended by thimble and tea party gatherings. Is it any wonder that the hard headed, horny handed, steady-going business men of all grades of business enterprise in the commercial world, from the peanut-stand keeper to the millionaire, are not aroused to an intense interest on the subject of foreign missions,—when this business is presented to them in such an apologetic, child's play fashion as all these methods exhibit. The way to arouse interest among the men, on the subject of foreign missions (and among women, too, for that matter, for almost the whole multitude are as cold as a gravestone), is to present foreign missions to them as the greatest enterprise this universe has ever heard tell of. An enterprise which demands their fortunes, their lives, their all. Did not the Son of God give His all, and sweat blood, and drink gall, and lay down His life to save this world? What kind of a policy is this that we have, which sets before the church a standard of an average of $1 a year per member for a work for which God gave His life?

III. But how, now, can foreign missions be thus presented so as to cause every Christian to be concerned, and arouse the members of our churches to realize that this is the greatest business enterprise of the world? The Word of God has given us the method and told us how.

It is this: Set before the churches and individual Christians their whole duty in a concrete and definite manner.

1. This was Christ's way. He set before the handful of disciples, which He had gathered about Him—"All the world."—as the field of their labors. But "all the world" was too general and abstract, so He broke it up into individual and concrete form, and said, "every creature." But to bring it still more definitely before their minds, He divides the field into distinct sections, with definite boundaries, and calls them Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and "the regions beyond." The regions beyond or the uttermost part of the earth is an abstract or general expression; so it is given concrete and definite meaning as a mission field, and specified as occupied by both Jews and Gentiles, and each of these designated as a definite and concrete mission work to be done by particularly assigned churches and missionaries.

2. Let us see what this method has to say to us.

(1). There are in round numbers one thousand million heathen in the world, who have never heard the Gospel. Following Christ's method, we find that of this number 160,000,000 fall to the Presbyterian church as her share of the heathen world for evangelization in this generation. We have now in the Presbyterian church about one million members. That means that each member is responsible on an average for the preaching of the Gospel to 160 heathen. That is your average share, and my average share. We are each thus individually responsible to see that 160 heathen have the crucified Christ intelligently preached to them in this their generation and ours. That is what this method says to you and me.

(2). But this method of Christ's makes the work of foreign missions still more concrete and definite. This method takes those 160 heathen people, which are your share of the great heathen world, to whom Christ is to be intelligently preached,—and locates them in

some heathen village. Having them located, it pictures them to us. We find that physically, they have no true conception as to how to care for their bodies. They have no scientific knowledge of medicine or nursing. When they are sick they are treated by so-called medicine men in a way that makes sickness ten times as bad as it would otherwise. Mentally, they are ignorant and superstitious to a degree that makes life a burden. Morally, they are depraved in heart and soul with leprous diseases of sin that are too terrible to name. Even little children are taught the vilest of sins before they know their right hand from their left. Sin, sorrow and suffering abound on every hand. And this village of 160 souls, who never have heard the Gospel, and who know nothing of Christ's love and salvation, of His purity and peace; never will know of these blessed things,—unless you tell them, or have it done, for it is your village.

(3). Consistent with the plan of Christ, there arise up among us, from our churches in the home land, men and women in large numbers, of whom the Holy Ghost says to the churches: "Separate them for the work whereunto I have called them and send them forth to preach the Gospel unto every creature. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. But how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things." The scriptural plan for arousing interest in saving a lost world places before the individual church the duty of sending forth and supporting foreign missionaries of its own. This method says to each local church: "Take at least one of these men, whom God's Spirit has called and send Him forth as your missionary. You should at least love your foreign neighbor as yourself. Any church able to support a local pastor on the home field should support at least one missionary pastor on the foreign field."

Let a definite proposition like that be deliberately and seriously made to any church in the light of the foregoing facts, and the members of that church will begin at once to prick up their ears and exclaim: "That sounds like business." The result will be, that where a church gave $100 to foreign missions before, it will now arise and give $1,000 to carry forward the work, and probably some of her own sons.

IV. This method works. I am not giving mere theory.

1. In 1895 this method was applied in the Second Presbyterian church of Lincoln, Neb. The church had contributed the year before, all told, under the heaviest possible pressure that could be brought to bear upon it under the old existing method of making contributions to the general fund, $163.00. The next year, by this method, during a year of droughth and great financial depression, worse than the previous year, the church contributed more than $800 for foreign missions and increased her offerings to all of the other boards, paid off a church debt, and added more than 100 members to her number, yet financially was really poorer than the previous year.

2. In 1897 this method was applied to the First Presbyterian church of Wichita, Kansas. The year previous the church had given all told to foreign missions $321.00. The next year, under this method, they increased their offerings to foreign missions to $604.00, increased their gifts largely to all of the other Boards of the church, paid off a large debt of $18,000; and closed the year with the finances of the church in the best condition they had been for years, and with over one hundred additions to the church membership. The next year this same church more than doubled its offerings of the previous year, and for the third year its offerings for this great work were more than twice those of the second year, or $2,700. This year they have increased to over $3,000. Requests are being made constantly for special objects of support, even before they are named, and it is confidently believed that before long the offerings of this church to foreign missions will amount to many thousands of dollars. The members of the church are becoming thoroughly aroused along all lines of Christian work.

When the new minister made his first pastoral call at the Fosdicks', he took little Anna up in his arms and tried to kiss her. But the child refused to be kissed; she struggled loose and ran off into the next room, where her mother was putting a few finishing touches to her adornment before going into the parlor to greet the clergyman. "Mamma," the little girl whispered, "the man in the parlor wanted me to kiss him." "Well," replied mamma, "why didn't you let him? I would if I were you." Thereupon little Anna ran back into the parlor, and the minister said: "Well, little lady, won't you kiss me now?" "No, I won't," replied Anna promptly, "but mamma says she will."—Harper's Bazar.

The sins of the community are denounced in a splendid way, but underneath this sensitiveness to public sins there is an insensibility to our own individual sins, out of which public sins grow.—Henry Van Dyke, D. D.

We make a wilderness by encouraging artificial wants, by creating sensual and devilish desires. The world we complain of as impure and wrong is not God's world, but your own, with its blank dullness and blight.—Frederick W. Robertson.

No one can take out of men's minds and hearts the seeds of evil he has dropped there. —J. R. Miller, D. D.

In some parts of Maine the people live to be very old. An old man of 90, living quite a distance from the nearest town, requiring some family groceries, sent his son, a man of 70 odd years of age. When the son failed to show up with the provisions in time, his grandfather, a centenarian of 108, said, peevishly, "That's what comes from sending a kid."

SPECIAL DEPARTMENTS

Edited by F. M. Barton.

FOOT PRINTS ON THE SANDS

Recent Events that are Valuable for Sermon Points.

BOXERS AND BOXERS.

The Jews are not permitted to reside outside the cities, and so are prevented from entering agriculture, which is about the only profitable occupation in Rumania. They serve in the Rumanian army, but are treated as foreigners. They are accused of murdering Christian children for the purposes of their ritual, being thus exposed to violence from fanatical mobs of Christians. There is hardly one door open to the Jew in Rumania. Small wonder is it, then, that he should turn his patient eyes westward and try to make his long-suffering way to the United States.

While we are wondering at the superstition that leads the Chinese "Boxers" to believe that "foreign devils" murder Chinese babies and place them under the tracks of the railroads, we should not forget that in several countries of Europe, including Germany, the home of learning, the Jews are accused of sacrificing Christian children in the performance of their ritual. (800)

A CHRISTIAN.

A Chinaman who had applied for membership in a Christian church was put back on the ground that he had not sufficient knowledge of the faith to be received. He was among the number seized by the Boxers, and technically might have been justified in denying that he was "one of them," but when he was questioned with a sword at his throat, he boldly answered: "Yes, I am a Christian." To his surprise, he was allowed to escape. It is worthy of note that the man who had not enough knowledge to be a member of the church had enough courage and fidelity to be a martyr. (801)

TWO FLAGS.

A U. S. cavalryman writes home from the Philippines that when the soldiers enter some villages, they find the Stars and Stripes floating over most of the buildings. Upon investigation it is found that the village officials keep out of trouble by having a set of both American and insurgent flags, and use either, as circumstances require. He tells of the capture of Filipinos, who are branded on the chest. This brand is the sign of a society called the "Catapunan," the aim of which is to render the insurgents all the aid possible. The respectable sinner has two flags, but he's branded. (802)

GATHERING EGGS.

The village of Cornwall, New York, has a woman's improvement society. Its business is to set out and care for trees, remove weeds and other unsightly objects, and improve the general appearance of the village streets. Recently the society offered a reward of 10 cents per hundred for egg clusters of the tent-caterpillar. The principal of the school as a further inducement, offered a $3 bat and a ball to the boy who should secure the largest number of clusters. Both boys and girls took hold with a will A committee of one was appointed to receive and burn the eggs. They came in lots of from 50 to 100. Some boys brought in as many as 4,000. The total number was 35,000. It is yet too early to tell what effect this will have on the prevalence of the tent-caterpillar in the village. But the work is to be continued in the fall, and if the result is at all favorable, it will no doubt be continued. 'As compared with a man a woman spells clean in italics. This is why they should be put on school boards and improvement societies.—If the egg of sin could be gathered in the embryo of temptation!

(803)

THE CITY'S BLIND.

A sadder or more pitiful spectacle is not to be seen under the sun than that which may be witnessed once every year at a certain point in New York City, when men and women stricken with blindness are summoned together to receive at the hands of the overseer of the outdoor poor a sum of money apportioned to them from the city treasury. The distribution this year took place on June 27th, on the pier of the department of charities at the foot of East Twenty-sixth street. The time set for payments to begin was 11:30 in the morning, but hours before that time the unfortunates came groping and tottering to the scene from every quarter of the city, so that by 10 o'clock there was a group of over 400 of the poor, sightless creatures huddled within the police lines on the pier, waiting patiently, but with anxious faces, for the giving of their dole. It was a motley crowd of men and women, young and old, of all nationalities and various colors, many of them dressed as neatly as possible for what was to them doubtless a happy occasion, but nearly all giving evidence of extreme poverty and with faces marked deeply by suffering and sorrow. No city or nation has enough wealth to distribute to the spiritually blind. (804)

LED BY GOLDEN PHANTOM.

Four thousand people stranded at Cape Nome appeal for Government transports to take them away before it is too late. This appeal fully justifies the abundant warnings that have been given to those who ventured there in spite of them. The rush to Cape Nome was far more heedless than to any other of the gold discoveries since '49; yet the unfortunate miners had the privations of the Klondike to

instruct them. Of course under the circumstances the Government will promptly respond to the appeal. Assuming the report of Captain Tuttle of the revenue cutter Bear to be correct, the number of those in danger is not less han ten thousand, all of whom will have to be taken away before the season of navigation closes. (805)

RESPONSIBILITY.

There are many characteristic reasons for a lack of solidarity among the Chinese people; but the most conspicuous is the elaborate system of responsibility that ramifies throughout the system of government and heads the extensive code of ethics by which the Chinese regulate the conduct of their every-day life. It is not difficult to trace the connection between the jellylike condition of Chinese national and civil life and the vicious and enervating principle that everybody is responsible, not only for his own acts, but also for the acts of somebody else. This condition accounts for the fact that an insignificant number of Manchu nobles are able to control the destiny of the empire and to dominate the people. To illustrate this principle, suppose that a pick-pocket "lifts" a watch or purse in one of the streets of Canton or Peking. If the thief escapes with his booty, the shopkeepers and residents along the street are held responsible and will make good the loss.—Saturday Evening Post.

It is said that each Christian is responsible for the salvation of 161 heathen. (806)

LIFE VS. DOLLARS.

For several years the railroads have been endeavoring to get their rolling stock equipped so as to comply with the law upon the arrival of the time when it should be put into operation. To do this has involved a great financial outlay. The twenty-five roads entering Chicago, for instance, have made the change at a cost of $48,747,820, which is a vast sum of money. But it is maintained that the decrease in the number of accidents will eventually repay the expenditure. As there is a fine of $100 for each violation of the law, no road will now accept a tabooed car from any other road, and the result is that many freight cars are temporarily out of service. The roads entering Chicago have 12,854 idle cars of this sort, which means a serious loss to the roads at a time like the present, when every available car is needed to move the vast wheat crops of Kansas and other Western States to market. But human life is of greater value than freight cars, and far more sacred than heaped up dollars. And this sentiment is growing today by leaps and bounds. (807)

THE WORD.

According to the eighty-fourth annual report of the American Bible Society, just issued, which covers the work of that venerable organization for the last portion of 1899 and the first part of 1900, the total issues for the year at home and abroad amount to 1,406,801 copies; of these, 832,497 were distributed outside of the United States—a very remarkable proportion, to use the words of the report. More than one-half of the issues were manufactured at the Bible House, New York, and of the residue a large part were printed in China, Japan, Syria and Turkey. The receipts by the society for the year were $287,409.04, including gifts from individuals, legacies, proceeds of sales, income, and from investments. (808)

MEN AND MENTION.

BUSINESS ON SUNDAY.

Dr. Albert Barnes, the great Biblical Commentator, was called at one time to visit a dying parishioner who, when his pastor came to his bedside, said: "Doctor, I have not heard a sermon for twenty years. Tell me how to be saved." Surprised at his words, Dr. Barnes said: "From your demeanor I thought you one of my most attentive hearers." But the man replied, "Alas, doctor, I have always taken that time to plan my business for the next week." And so, though regularly in his place on the Sabbath in the sanctuary, through preoccupation of mind with his worldly affairs, he had for twenty years failed to hear a sermon. One of the greatest expounders of the Word had been speaking in his ears the messages of divine truth and grace, but hearing he had not heard.—International Evangel. (809)

LOVE BEAUTIFIES.

Prof. Herkomer's aged father, who lives with him in his splendid home at Bushney, used to model clay in his early life. He has recently taken to it again, but his fear is that soon his hands will lose their skill, and his work will show the marks of imperfection. It is his one sorrow. At night he goes to his early rest, and when he has gone his talented son goes into his studio, takes up his fathers feeble attempts, and makes the work as beautiful as art can make it. When the old man comes down in the morning, he takes his work and looks at it, and rubs his hands, and says: "Ha! I can do as well as I ever did!" May we not believe that the hands of Divine love will thus make over our feeble work for God till it shall bear the light of day and be perfect to all eternity? (810)

NO PLACE FOR SACRED THINGS.

I remember hearing Madame Nordica ask Jean de Reszke whether she should cross herself on ending the prayer of Desdemona.

"Never," was the reply; "touch your breast with your closed hand, so"—suiting the action to the word and with bowed head—"that will have the same effect, with the advantage of not dragging sacred things into play, which is something I think neither right nor in good taste." (811)

TIME.

We are indebted to the great Roman general and ruler, Julius Cæsar, for our year, for the

length of our month, and for the extra day in leap-year; we are indebted to a studious pope, Gregory XIII., for a uniform chronology common to all civilized lands; to far-away half-mythical Numa Pempilius for New Year's Day on the first of January, and the months as we know them. The Roman heathen gave us three of our week day names, and the heathenish and altogether ungodly Norsemen supplied us with the names of the other four, while the name of the Sabbath comes from the Jews. Heathen, Christian and Jew, crowned pope, world-famous conqueror and obscure pirate of the seas, each and all have helped to make and shape our system of time for us. Surely the science of computing time may well be called cosmopolitan, since it is a result of the labor of the wise men of all lands, a labor that continued through three thousand years, and perhaps longer.—We are indebted to Christ for eternal life. (812)

SERMON-SUBJECTS.

Many "dear hearers" will sympathise with the dislike which the late Dr. Storrs is said to have felt for a series of sermons on the animals of the Bible, or the flowers of the Bible, or whatever the particular catchword may be. He once expressed his surprise that no ingenious preacher had chosen the asses of the Bible as the subject of a series. "There was Balaam's ass, who was a better orator than its master. There was Job's wild ass that was sent out free, and the ass on which our Lord rode." He added, with a severity that was perhaps a little too unkind, that if such a preacher found the number insufficient for a long series he might eke it out by contributing an autobiographical sketch. (813)

A C. E. CAB DRIVER.

Dr. F. E. Clark, President of the Christian Endeavor Society, was agreeably surprised by a talk with a cab-driver in London. Dr. Clark never neglects an opportunity for religious converse and he uttered a few words to the driver of the cab in which he rode across the city. The driver replied that he was not only a Christian, but a Christian Endeavorer, and his cab was never out on a Sunday. He was delighted when Dr. Clark disclosed his identity. (814)

FAITH-CURE.

It is well known that Dr. P. S. Henson of Chicago has a defective eye. A good man and his wife, members of the Henson "household of faith," have felt for some time that their pastor would be much improved if the lame eye could be made like unto the other. These persons are firm believers in the faith-cure theory. They went to see him about it.

"We have been praying for you, that you may have two perfect eyes," they said to the doctor, "and have now come to pray with you. Will you not ask the Lord right here and now to give you a new eye?"

Doctor Henson's reply was startling.

"What kind of teeth have you?" he suddenly asked the brother.

"Why—why, that's a strange question," he stammered, "but I don't mind telling you that my teeth are mostly false."

"What kind of teeth do you use, sister?" he asked of the other.

"Same kind," she frankly admitted.

"Well, good friends," rejoined the doctor, "you go and ask God to grow some new teeth in your mouths. According to your theory, He will do it without delay. When you get your teeth, come round, and we will see what can be done about the new eye!"

This happened some time ago, but the good people are still grinding on artificial molars, and Doctor Henson still looks down on his great congregation with one eye.—Epworth Herald. (815)

WASTEFUL DESTROYERS.

The most objectionable sight in the United States that I know of, the one that has always struck me as, perhaps, the most—well, I was going to say revolting—is to watch at hotels Americans ordering soup, fish, two entrees, three kinds of roast meat, poultry or game, three or four vegetables, two or three sweets, just take a mouthful of each and send it all away.

This very morning at my hotel there was at my table a man who did not look as if at home he could afford two square meals a day. He ordered for breakfast oatmeal, bacon and two eggs, lamb stew, steak, potatoes and buckwheat cakes.

He ate an egg, messed the fish and the bacon with his fork, had one bite at the steak; in fact, did not use one-twentieth of the quantity of food he had asked. I maintain without any fear of being contradicted, that there is enough food, good food, wasted in the hotels of every American city, to feed, and amply feed, all the poor people who dwell in it.—Max O'Rell. (816)

Great Thoughts *of* Great Men.

ON SOUL WINNING.

A soul won is the best instrument for winning souls.—Arnot.

Heaven has its myriads of saved sinners; but they were gathered there one by one.—T. L. Cuyler, D. D.

While we aim at few, we shall win but few; for that our success shall take their proportion from our faith is the universal law of the service of Christ.—Rev. William Arthur.

The Good Shepherd goes himself; he does not send another man, angel, or archangel. It is by personal work, not by proxy, we are to seek and to save that which is lost.—Lyman Abbot, D. D.

No convert is too recent, too uninstructed, to bring others to Christ. Convinced in his own heart that Jesus is the Christ, he can, with Philip, at least echo our Lord's own words to seeking disciples, "Come and see."—Record of Christian Work.

It must always be in the contact of soul with soul, and personal life with personal life, that

Christian missions have their real essentia' character and purity.—Phillips Brooks.

If you stand half a mile off from a man, an throw the gospel at him, you will miss him! but if you go close to him and lay hold upon him, giving him a hearty grip of the hand, and show that you have an affection for him, you will, by God's blessing, lead him in the right way.—Spurgeon.

I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, if I could gain souls to Christ. While I was asleep, I dreamed of these things; when I was awake, the first thing I thought of was this great work. All my desire was for the conversion of souls, and all my hope was in God.—David Brainerd. (817)

ON TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

Personal abstinence lies at the foundation of our great reform.—Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

For thirty years I have been a temperance man, and I am too old to change.—Abraham Lincoln.

Total abstinence is the surest way, all other things being equal, of attaining the highest physical, mental, moral, and every other kind of health.—Norman Kerr, M. D.

We esteem worthy of all commendation the noble resolve of your pious associations, by which they pledge themselves to abstin totally from every kind of intoxicating drink.—Pope Leo XIII.

Let there be an entire abstinence from intoxicating drinks throughout this country during the period of a single generation, and a mob would be as impossible as combustion without oxygen.—Hon. Horace Mann.

Oh that we could get them sober, and perhaps we might make better men of them. You cannot do much with these fellows, unless you can enlist them in the cold-stream guards.—Charles Spurgeon, D. D.

Total abstinence we seek through voluntary action for the promotion of individual virtue and of the general good. Legal prohibition we seek for as means of guarding our rights. Let the law cease to appeal to us by taxing us for the support of pauperism and crime caused by the selling of intoxicating drinks, and we will cease to appeal to the law.—Mark Hopkins, D. D. (818)

ON HIGHER CRITICISM.

The decrying of creed in the interest of conduct is very natural, but very superficial. If it succeeded, it would make life and conduct blind and weak. There is no greater misnomer applied to creeds and opinions than that which lurks in the word "advanced." The man whose creed is the smallest, the most crude and colorless and flimsy, is called "advanced," while he whose beliefs are richest and most full of hope and liberty is called "slow," "behind the times," and other tardy names. The man who believes nothing with any energy, who masks the doctrines of our Lord's gospel under negations, who evaporates them into a thin mist of speculation, who emasculates them of their energy by subtracting their vital forces, who has a cynical sneer for every effort of a stalwart faith—such a man is called an "advanced thinker." The cheerless iconoclasm which is for ever breaking down the strong barrier erected in former time parades before the world as "free thought." It is no advance, but inertia—no free thought, but dullard slavery—which leads man into a state like that. Exactness, earnestness, and precise fidelity to the truth of things are better than a limp negation, and make a man a true, free, and advanced thinker.—Phillips Brooks. (819)

ON PRAYER.

God knows our needs before we ask. Then what is prayer for? Not to inform him, nor to move him, unwillingly, to have mercy, as if like some proud prince he required a certain amount of recongition to his greatness as the price of his favors. But to fit our own hearts by conscious need and true desire and dependence to receive the gifts which he is ever willing to give, but which we are not always fit to receive. As St. Augustine has it, "the empty vessel is by prayer carried to the fountain."—Alexander McLaren. (820)

ON MUSIC.

In a sermon on music Russell H. Conwell made use of the following fact. He said:—

I was surprised to read that the effect of the organ notes played in the great cathedral at Rheims has been of such a nature that the stone walls crumbled in some places as a direct result of the vibration. They are obliged now to replace those stones that are especially touched by the musical vibration. Science has shown that stones of different density are affected by different sounds, and that if a church be constructed of a certain form of limestone, found in northern Germany, the organ notes, especially of the minor chords, will soon destroy the density of the stone and bring the building itself to destruction. The scientists tell us now that there is one tone that will crumble any rock, from the softest sandstone to the hardest flint. They believe that it is possible for a sound to be reached which will disintegrate the diamond in its hardness, and gradually crumble it. It is a fact that the rocks are influenced by sound, and when we read of Apollo's playing and the rocks did listen, we were nearer a scientific truth than we thought. (821

ON ASSURANCE.

When his age was eighty years, John Quincy Adams was met on the streets of Boston by an old friend, who taking his trembling hand, said: "Good morning! And how is John Quincy Adams today?" "Thank you," the ex-President replied, "John Quincy Adams himself is well, sir; quite well. I thank you. But the house in which he lives at present is becoming delapidated. It is tottering upon its foundation. Time and the seasons have nearly destroyed it. Its roof is pretty well worn out. Its walls are much shattered, and it trembles with every wind. The old tenement is becoming almost uninhabitable, and I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it soon, but he himself is quite well, sir, quite well."—Ex. (822)

THE CHILDREN.

A HOME IN HEAVEN.

A man was dying not long ago, and told his little daughter how dreadfully he felt because he must die. She said to him: "Why, papa, you have a beautiful home in the city; and a beautiful home in the mountains; and a beautiful home in Florida; and a beautiful home by the sea. Haven't you a beautiful home in heaven, papa?" He was obliged to shake his head sadly, and say that he did not know.—Selected. (826)

"SOMEBODY FORGETS."

A little boy, living in the most poverty-stricken section of a great city, found his way into the mission Sabbath School and became a Christian. One day not long after some one tried to shake the child's faith by asking him some puzzling questions. "If God really loves you, why doesn't he take better care of you? Why doesn't he tell somebody to send you a pair of shoes, or else coal enough so that you can keep warm this winter?"

The boy thought a moment and then said, as the tears rushed to his eyes: "I guess he does tell somebody, and somebody forgets." (827)

AN ARMY OF TWENTY MILLIONS.

Within a few days nearly twenty million boys and girls will be enrolled in the public and private schools of the United States, forming the greatest army of its kind the world has ever known. About two million of these will be in the private and incorporated institutions, and nearly eighteen million in the public schools. There will be nearly a half million in the city evening schools, the private kindergartens, the Indian and business schools, and others. The private schools always show a larger proportion of increase in good times because the parents then have more money with which to educate their children. But at their best these private schools have only about one-eighth or one-ninth of the total of the public schools. The public school system is therefore our chief educational fact and factor. It is the greatest single institution of the country. Its teachers number nearly one-half a million—about three-fourths are women—and these carry on their work in nearly 300,000 schoolhouses. To pay for all these requires upward of two hundred million dollars a year, and the value of the school property is between five and six hundred millions. (828)

WHAT IS LIFE?

A little crib beside the bed,
A little face above the spread,
A little frock behind the door,
A little shoe upon the floor.

A little lad with dark brown hair,
A little blue-eyed face, and fair,
A little lane that leads to school,
A little pencil, slate and rule.

A little blithesome, winsome maid,
A little hand within his laid;
A little cottage, acres four,
A little old-time household store.

A little family gathered round
A little turf-heaped, tear-dewed mound;
A little added to his soil;
A little rest from hardest toil.

A little silver in his hair,
A little stool and easy chair,
A little night of earth-lit gloom,
A little cortege to the tomb. (821)

ON ONE DROP OF RED PAINT.

A boy walked into a house-painter's shop one day and stood looking at the different colors. The painter had gone out for something, and the boy thought he would investigate a little.

On the floor stood a keg containing fifty pounds of thick white lead, and close beside it was a smaller one filled with Indian red all ready for the brush. In each was a wooden paddle for stirring up the paint. The boy took hold of the paddle in the smaller keg and held it up, watching the thin red stream which flowed from the end. Something startled him and he turned quickly and let a single drop fall into the white lead. There it lay, one little red spot in the white mass.

The boy was frightened and wanted to repair the mischief he had done, but he went at it the wrong way. The red paint had not mixed with the white, for the white was too stiff. If he had taken a little stick or the point of his pocket knife he might easily have lifted it out and there would have been no harm done. Instead he tried to hide it by stirring it in. At first a little red streak followed the paddle round and round; soon it disappeared, but some of the lead was stained a light pink. The boy stirred deeper and deeper, and at last he thought that the red drop was completely hidden. Every spot and streak was gone, and it seemed to him that it was all as clean and pure as ever. But the first thing that the painter said when he came in and looked at it was: "That keg of white lead isn't very white. I wonder what's the matter with it."

Some of us have tried to do the same thing with the spots in our characters that the boy did with the spot in the white paint. Instead of removing them we seek to hide them by mixing them up with good deeds and high motives. It's a very poor way. Root a sin out, and you are rid of it; leave it there and, no matter how well it is covered up, the Painter will find it, if no one else does.—W. D. Hulbert. (822)

The possibilities of the "animal story" are remarkably well shown by Mr. W. A. Fraser in his new tales, entitled "Mooswa of the Boundaries." These are stories of Rod, the Boy, and the fur-bearing animals of the northwest and the half-breed trappers who hunt them. Each of the tales teems with curious bits of wood-lore and little-known facts about the moose, beaver, bear, lynx, fox and wolf.

Mr. Arthur Heming, who has illustrated the stories, is a sportsman and naturalist, as well as an artist. In The Saturday Evening Post.